



# Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Ia Drang, Vietnam Silver Star Winner to Attend Conference**

Willard Parish, who won the Silver Star for his work as a machine gunner at LZ X-Ray during the Vietnam War, will attend next week's conference at the Eisenhower Center, "Reporting the Wars: From WWII Pigeons to Embedded Journalists." In 1965, twenty-four year old Specialist Willard F. Parish, a native of Bristow, Oklahoma, was assistant squad leader of one of Charlie Company's 81 mm-mortar squads, and one of the mortarmen outfitted with spare machine guns and rifles picked up from U.S. casualties. According to extracts from his Silver Star citation, which was awarded to Parish in June 1966, he delivered lethal fire on wave after wave of the enemy until he ran out of ammunition. Then, standing up under fire with a .45 pistol in each hand, he fired clip after clip into the enemy, who were twenty yards out, and stopped their attack. More than one hundred dead North Vietnamese were later found where they had fallen in a semicircle around his foxhole. He was among the draftees who rotated home in December 1965 for discharge. For a number of years he was a country-and-western band leader and disc jockey, and later ran the Bristow, Oklahoma, toll gate on the Turner Turnpike.

Registration for the conference, which is free and open to the public, begins at noon on Friday, May 27. William Hammond, chief of General Histories Branch, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, D.C., will open with *From WWII to The Gulf: Newsreels to Live Coverage* at 1:30 p.m. in the Visitors Center auditorium, followed by Bill Snead, Senior Editor/Interim Managing Editor, Lawrence Journal-World, Lawrence, Kansas, chief UPI photographer in Saigon from 1967-1969 and later photo editor for the Washington Post, will present with *Picturing War*. Kansas State University Journalism professor,

Fred Brock's presentation is titled, Millitary Briefings, Pool Coverage and Embedded Reporters: Ft. Leavenworth and Beyond.

All three presenters will then join Joseph Galloway, Senior Military Correspondent, Knight Ridder News, and co-author of We Were Soldiers Once...and Young, with Lt. General Hal Moore, USA (Ret.), and later made into the movie, *We Were Soldiers*, starring Mel Gibson, at 3:30 p.m. for a panel discussion.

That evening, a reception, dinner, and Joseph Galloway lecture and book signing will be held. Admission is \$25 per person and reservations may be made by calling the Eisenhower Center toll free at 877 RING IKE or 785-263-6700.

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